REMARKS

Claims 1-6, 9-14 and 21-26 are all the claims pending in the application. Claims 24-26 have been withdrawn from consideration as being drawn to a non-elected invention. Claims 1-6, 9-14 and 21-23 presently stand rejected.

The specification is objected to for failing to provide "antecedent" basis for the claimed subject matter. Also, the drawings filed March 23, 1998 are objected to by the Examiner for allegedly failing to show all the claimed features.

Claims 1-6, 9-14 and 21-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph.

Claims 1-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Waratani et al. (JP 4-64414) and Peterson et al. (4,954,872).

Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Waratani et al. (JP 4-64414) and Peterson et al. (4,954,872), and further in view of Huber (4,845,396).

Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Waratani et al. (JP 4-64414) and Peterson et al. (4,954,872) and further in view of Yoshida (JP 4-34995).

Claims 9-11, 21 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's admitted prior art and Waratani et al. (JP 4,64414).

Claims 12 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's admitted prior art and Waratani et al. (JP 4-64414), and further in view of Huber (4,845,396).

Claims 14 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's admitted prior art and Waratani et al. (JP 4-64414), and further in view of Yoshida (JP 4-34995).

Objection to the Specification and Drawings

The Examiner objects to the specification for not providing "antecedent" basis for the claimed "end portions of the wires". Applicant's discussion below in regard to the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, addresses this issue.

The Examiner objects to the drawings for failing to show the claimed end portions of the wires, the deformation preventer being flush with the end portion, and the vertical and horizontal extension of the deformation preventer. In response, Applicant submits that at least FIGS. 1 and 3 of the present application show a "deformation preventer" 62, that is "flush with", or immediately adjacent to, "end portions" of wires 63.

In regard to the "vertical and horizontal extension of the deformation preventer" referenced by the Examiner, Applicant is unsure as to which claim element the Examiner is referring. If the Examiner is referring to claim 23, in which it is recited "wherein said deformation preventer traverses both horizontally and vertically across the top and bottom surfaces of said insert conductor", Applicant submits that at least FIG. 1, and its attendant description at page 9, lines 9-16, illustrates an embodiment of the present invention in which the deformation preventer 62 traverses both horizontally and vertically on the top and bottom of the conductor 61. If, on the other hand, the Examiner is referring to claim language found in a claim other than claim 23, Applicant respectfully requests clarification.

In view of the above discussion, no proposed drawing corrections have been submitted and none are deemed necessary. If corrected drawings become necessary, Applicant will submit a proposed drawing correction for approval by the Examiner.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §112, first and second paragraphs

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-6, 9-14 and 21-23 for containing subject matter not sufficiently described in the specification. In particular, the Examiner cites the claimed "end portions of the wires" and "the deformation preventer being flush with the end portions of the conductor" as not being disclosed in the specification. In response, Applicant submits that at least FIGS. 1 and 3, as originally presented in the application, disclose end portions of wires 63 being "flush with", or immediately adjacent to, the deformation preventer 62 – for example, see the right-most portion of the deformation preventer 62 in FIG. 3 where it is shown to be "flush with" the right-most, "end" portions of wires 63. Accordingly, without adding "new matter", Applicant has amended the specification to explicitly provide additional written disclosure of what is shown in the original figures, as discussed above.

In regard to the claim recitation, "said deformation preventer traverses both horizontally and vertically across the top and bottom surfaces of said insert conductor", as discussed above in regard to the drawing objection, Applicant submits that the specification and drawings sufficiently disclose this claimed feature. Specifically, Applicant submits that at least FIG. 1, and its attendant description at page 9, lines 9-16, illustrates an embodiment of the present invention in which the deformation preventer 62 traverses both horizontally and vertically on the top and bottom of the conductor 61. For example, in FIG. 3, see the right-most portion of deformation preventer 62 traversing vertically across wires 63 and the bottom portion of deformation preventer 62 traversing horizontally across wires 63.

For at least these reasons, Applicant submits that all of the claims satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112 and, accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection under §112, first and second paragraphs, is believed to be warranted.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-4 as being unpatentable over Waratani et al. in view of Peterson et al. At least because the proposed combination of references fails to teach or suggest the claimed deformation preventer flush with end portions of the wires, Applicant submits that claims 1-4 are patentable over the cited prior art.

Specifically, contrary to the assertions of the Examiner, Peterson et al. does not disclose a deformation preventer "flush with the longitudinal end of the wire". To the contrary, as shown in FIGS. 4 and 5, Peterson et al. discloses "elongated stabilizers 32, 34 which hold flimsy lengths of contact leads 36." It is clear, from viewing FIG. 1 in conjunction with FIGS. 4 and 5, that the stabilizers 32 and 34 cover the middle portions of wires 36 and not the end portions, as claimed. Accordingly, because the proposed combination of Waratani et al. and Peterson et al. fails to teach or suggest each and every element of independent claim 1, claim 1 and all claims dependent therefrom, specifically claims 2-4, are patentable over the proposed combination and withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Waratani et al. and Peterson et al. and further in view of Huber. Because claim 5 depends from claim 1 and further because Huber fails to compensate for the deficiencies in Waratani et al and Peterson et al. set forth above, Applicant submits that claim 5 is patentable.

Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Waratani et al. and Peterson et al. and further in view of Yoshida. Because claim 6 depends from claim 1 and further because Yoshida fails to compensate for the deficiencies in Waratani et al and Peterson et al. set forth above, Applicant submits that claim 6 is patentable.

Claims 9-11, 21 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's alleged admitted prior art and Waratani et al. At least because the proposed combination of references fails to teach or suggest the claimed "insulating member disposed on at least end portions of the wires" of claim 9, Applicant submits that claims 9-11 are patentable over the cited prior art. Further, at least because the proposed combination of references fails to teach or suggest the claimed "deformation preventer being operable to prevent end portions of at least some of a plurality of wires from being deformed", as claimed in 21, Applicant submits that claims 21 and 23 are patentable over the cited prior art.

Specifically, as shown in FIGS. 4 and 5 of Waratani et al., the "deformation preventers" 2 are disposed across the middle portions of wires 1 and not across the end portions. Accordingly, the proposed combination of Waratani et al. with the Applicant's discussion of the conventional art does not, and can not, meet all the requirements of the claim. Therefore, claim 9, and all claims dependent thereon, specifically claims 10-14 are patentable over the cited prior art.

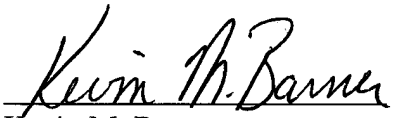
In regard to claim 21, because the "deformation preventer" 2 is not disposed across the end portions of wires 1, it cannot prevent the end portions of the wires from being deformed, as recited in the claim. Accordingly, claim 21 and all claims dependent thereon, specifically claims 22 and 23, are patentable over the cited prior art.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing remarks, the application is believed to be in form for immediate allowance with claims 1-6, 9-14 and 21-23, and such action is hereby solicited. **If the Examiner is unable to allow the case on the next Office Action, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney to arrange either a personal or telephonic interview.**

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



Kevin M. Barner
Registration No. 46,075

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

23373
PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE

Date: June 3, 2003

Attorney Docket No.: Q49782